# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1019
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NOFN Project
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**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the Government proposes to build proper ecosystem and sustainable models to avoid glitches in the implementation of the National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government proposes to merge e-governance programmes of Centre, State and local authorities into Digital India; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

## Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) In order to review the strategy, approach and to avoid the complexities of implementation of National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) Project towards its speedy implementation, a Committee was constituted on 14th January, 2015. The Committee submitted its report on 31st March, 2015. The Committee, inter-alia, recommended that the project be renamed as BharatNet to reflect the national aspiration to establish a highly scalable network infrastructure accessible on a non-discriminatory basis to realize the vision of Digital India, in partnership with the States and the private sector. Major recommendations of the Committee are given at Annexure-I.

(b) & (c) Digital India is a programme to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. It is an Umbrella Programme that covers multiple Government agencies of Centre, State/UT and local authorities. The programme aims at pulling together many existing schemes. The schemes have been restructured and re-focused and are being implemented in a synchronized manner.

Annexure-I
Major recommendations of the Committee on National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN)

(i) Fresh optical fibre (48/96 core) should be laid in ring topology between District Headquarters (DHQs) and Block Headquarters (BHQs).
(ii) Gram Panchayats with more than 500 householdsshould be connected to BHQ in ring topology (24 core). Gram Panchayats with lessthan 500 households situated upto a distance of 7.5 km from BHQ should be connected in a linear network through Gigabit Passive Optical Network(GPON).
(iii) Far flung GPs (over a distance of 7.5 km from BHQ) and having less than 500 households should be connected through radio network and very low household GPs having less than 150 households at a distance of greater than 10 km from BHQ by satellite.
(iv) Government Institutions at the District/Block/GP should be provided horizontal connectivity.
(v) Internet Protocol/ Multi Level Switching Protocol (IP/MPLS) technology for DHQ/BHQ and BHQ/GP rings may be considered.
(vi) Three implementation models, namely, State Led, CPSU Led and Private Sector Led, may be considered for accelerated roll out of the network.
(vii) 50% pairs of dark fibres at GP level may be set aside for allocation to telecom service providers, multi service operators, local cable operators and internet service providers through auction.
(viii) Remaining fibre pairs should be provided for bandwidth at wholesale rate to any retail service providers.
(ix) BBNL should be empowered into Board-led Company and professionalize decision making and accountability so that BBNL's professional staff would operate in organizational framework with clearly defined responsibilities and powers;
(x) De-layering decision making process by establishing an empowered project group headed by MoC&IT and including Secretaries of Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Department of Electronics and IT (DeitY), Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP), Rural Development, Power, Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog and Chairman, BBNL.

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